



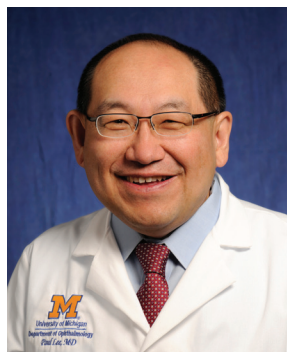
WINTER/SPRING 2020

CONTRIBUTOR REPORT

National Alliance For Eye And Vision Research | Alliance For Eye and Vision Research

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Power of Biomedical Research



Paul Lee, MD, JD

First and foremost, the NAEVR and AEVR Boards hope that all of you are well and staying safe as we adjust to these challenging times. The COVID-19 pandemic emphasizes the importance of biomedical research, from fundamental molecular genetics to public health and the impact of public policy on global health.

who wore his "AEVR hat" during the Briefing and his "NAEVR hat" while accompanying a Kellogg contingent in Michigan delegation visits.

Immediately after that event, Jim flew to London with Blinded Veterans Association (BVA) President Thomas Zampieri, PhD to participate in the Blind Veterans United Kingdom's (BVUK) Research Week. The Boards appreciate BVUK hosting Jim as he learned more about the organization entering into an agreement with BVA to conduct research jointly, as well as to garner Congressional support for a US-UK Joint Ocular Trauma Care Task Force. If implemented, the latter could potentially enable the BVUK/BVA research effort to draw upon each country's veterans databases to result in large and statistically powerful studies about this population and the implications of vision loss. It could also potentially present additional funding opportunities for researchers.

As you read this Report, which includes information through mid-April, you will see that it details Alliances activities prior to the pandemic, as well

As you can see to the right, the Alliances' Boards have continued to be active, with each the NAEVR and AEVR Board recently electing Michael

"What ties the Alliances' pre-pandemic and current activities together is the message about the importance of biomedical research to our lives."

as those that have occurred as a consequence of COVID-19. What ties the pre-pandemic and current activities together is the message about the importance of biomedical research to our lives, especially now in finding an effective vaccine and treatments for this disease, as well as how that knowledge can be applied in the future to other potential pandemics and debilitating diseases. NAEVR's messaging is one of support for all science agencies engaged in our nation's COVID-19 response, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Eye Institute (NEI), as Congress grapples with supplemental and Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 funding issues.

The NAEVR and AEVR Alliances have continued to be active in their respective advocacy and educational roles. As you can see in the box right, NAEVR is partnering with ARVO to hold a May 19 Webinar on Department of Defense (DOD) Vision Research Program (VRP) funding, focusing on opportunities that will be identified in an upcoming FY2020 Program Announcement. The Webinar replaces the popular NAEVR session held annually at the ARVO Annual Meeting, and with cancellation of that 2020 event in Baltimore, NAEVR hopes to partner with ARVO on additional funding Webinars that are open to all.

AEVR is also reviewing its Congressional Briefing program for 2020, and depending on future social distancing requirements may consider Webinars for Hill staff and the vision community. In late February and in conjunction with the American Glaucoma Society's (AGS) Advocacy Day, I had the privilege of participating in AEVR's *World Glaucoma Week 2020* Congressional Briefing, speaking about the impact of federal research funding at the NEI on glaucoma research and clinical practice. This provided an opportunity to spend the day with Alliances Executive Director James Jorkasky,

Robinson, MD (Allergan, Inc) as a Director. During the Boards' mid-May call replacing the on-site meeting it would have had at ARVO, each Board will elect Directors to fill the seats of term-limited Directors. The Alliances' Boards are committed to involvement with the broad specialty interests of the vision research community as a whole and the power of diversity in improving our work and effectiveness. We look forward to sharing the results of that election with you.

The Boards wish to recognize the anniversaries that occurred in first-quarter 2020 of two Alliances members who have served as important strategic partners in many NAEVR and AEVR activities. In early February Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) celebrated its 60th anniversary, and in late March BVA celebrated its 75th anniversary. We congratulate and express our appreciation to each organization for its unique history and major contribution in supporting vision research.

Finally, the Boards want to thank all members who have committed financially to supporting the Alliances in 2020. Although we are not yet sure as to what shape and form our advocacy and educational activities will take for the remainder of this unprecedented year, you can be certain that the Alliances will continue to work with new formats and approaches to promote the vital importance of vision research and to keep our shared community informed.

Paul Lee, MD, JD
Director, W.K. Kellogg Eye Center/University of Michigan Medical School
NAEVR/AEVR Boards President
pleemd@med.umich.edu
734-764-6468

On March 11, each the Board of Directors of NAEVR and AEVR elected Michael Robinson, MD (Allergan, Inc.) as a Director to serve in the class of 2020-2023. Dr. Robinson, who currently serves as Vice President and Global Therapeutic Area Head for Ophthalmology, had served at the NIH from 1997-2005, initially as a Senior Staff Fellow in Clinical Ophthalmology and then Chief, Consult Services Section of the NEI. He replaces Yehia Hashad, MD, Allergan's Senior Vice President and Head of Global Clinical Development, who served on each Board from 2015-2020. "The Boards thank Dr. Hashad for his service and wish him the best in his expanded role at Allergan, while we welcome Dr. Robinson and his extensive clinical and research expertise," said Dr. Lee in a press release.



Michael Robinson, MD



Yehia Hashad, MD

NAEVR/ARVO To Hold May 19 Defense-related Vision Research Opportunities Webinar

With the cancellation of the Annual Meeting, ARVO is partnering with NAEVR to present a May 19 Webinar version of NAEVR's annual *Defense-related Vision Research Opportunities* session. Featured speaker Tian Wang, PhD, who serves as the Vision Program Manager within the Department of Defense's (DOD) Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), will discuss the FY2020 Vision Research Program (VRP) funding announcement. Visit the ARVO and NAEVR Web sites for full information.